**IT Applications Unit 3, AOS 1, Online Communities**

Complete the following, from Chapter 2, Online Communities, pgs, 44 –

1. Define an online community?

An online community is a group of people using web 2 technologies.

**Types of online communities:**

**Social networks and communities**

1. Describe the nature of a social networking site.

Social Networking sites allow users to communicate online and the sites evolve as the membership demographic changes.

1. List egs. of these sites.

Facebook, Google Wave, LinkedIn, Twitter and YouTube are popular social networking sites.

1. What is the primary purpose of social networking sites?

To allow users to socialise, by sharing their interests, stories, thoughts, photos and videos with other members of the community.

1. Is there governance over these sites and do they add “new” content to the internet?

There is no real governance to what is posted on these websites. However, when someone posts something offensive they can be forced to remove it. No new content is added to the internet because it is mostly comprised of opinions and personal information.

Personal Profile Sites

1. Describe the nature of personal profile sites.

Personal Profile sites allow users to create a profile page that lists their friends and information about themselves.

1. As a social networking tool what does Facebook enable users to do?

It allows users to share their personal details and friend lists, as well as posting thoughts and photos. Businesses can advertise to millions of users online and people can create fan groups to keep in touch with likeminded people.

1. What type of tool is twitter?

Twitter is a micro-blogging tool that allows the sharing of short messages (max 140 words)

1. What have been the strengths & weaknesses of twitter?

Twitter is capable of sharing information much quicker than traditional media, such as natural disasters. It operates much the same as a mobile phone text, and can be used to share thoughts and feelings. However because Twitter has no moderation and the environment is social, most posts have been labelled as pointless babble.

1. What do social networking tools, such as Flicker and YouTube allow users to do?

Flicker and YouTube allow users to upload and share different types of media including photos and videos.

Issue:

1. How do social networking sites pose a legal and ethical minefield for employers?

If an employee was to post offensive materials online, it could lead to all sorts of problems including a drop of sales or legal action. In most cases, employers must dismiss works who behave in such a manner online. People can pose as employees of a company and create problems such as sex scandals or drug crimes, etc.

**Professional or work-based communities, p 49**

1. Describe the characteristics of professional or work-based communities.

Work-based communities often involve discussion areas and mailing lists, with rules to govern how employees can access and use the sites. Most sites have ‘off topic’ areas to separate general talk away from business related matters.

1. How does membership differ in these communities to social networking sites?

Membership to these sites is often closed, while social media sites are open to anyone to use. In general employees use their own truthful information instead of an avatar in order to gain personal standing in the company.

1. How does the content differ from social networking sites?

Most of the content on these sites will be strictly work/topic related, whereas on social media people can post whatever they like with little regulation.

**Project and interest based communities**

1. List the characteristics of these communities.

Project and interest based communities ore often open to the public, have free membership, and encourage the exchanging of ideas.

1. List an eg. of an interest based community.

An example of this is the Morris Minor car club, which acts as a calendar for the events the company holds.

1. Visit the project based community, <http://handmadehelpsout.blogspot.com/> as an eg. of one of these sites.